Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BELGRA 08433 281454Z
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 PA-01 PRS-01
USIA-06 /038 W
----------281456Z 010705 /53
R 281400Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9083
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ZAGREB

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BELGRADE 8433

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, YO
SUBJECT: MID-AIR COLLISION NEAR ZAGREB SEPTEMBER 10, 1976

REF: A) BELGRADE 5943; B) BELGRADE 5944

1. ON DECEMBER 23, THE YUGOSLAV COMMISSION OF INQUIRY LOOKING INTO THE SEPT. 10 MID-AIR COLLISION OF A BRITISH AIRWAYS TRIDENT AND AN INEX-ADRIA DC-9, RELEASED ITS FINDINGS ON THE CAUSE OF THE CRASH.

2. PART OF THE REPORT, AS CARRIED BY TANJUG, FOLLOWS:
"THE TRIDENT 3 PLANE FLEW FROM LONDON TO ISTANBUL OVER WESTERN EUROPE AND THROUGH A PART OF THE AIR CORRIDOR OVER YUGOSLAVIA, IN THE DIRECTION OF VOR ZAGREB, AT AN ALTITUDE OF 35,000 FEET. UPON ENTERING YUGOSLAV AIRSPACE THE CREW OF THE TRIDENT PLANE ESTABLISHED RADIO CONTACT WITH ZAGREB REGIONAL FLIGHT CONTROL AT 11:04 HOURS CET, ANTICIPATING ITS FLYOVER THE ZAGREB VOR AT 11:14 HOURS CET, AT THE SAME ALTITUDE.
THE DC-9 TOOK OFF FROM SPLIT AT 10:48 HOURS CET AND REACHED AN ALTITUDE OF 12,000 FEET (3,650 METERS) OVER THE SPLIT VOR.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BELGRA 08433 281454Z

THEN IT SWITCHED TO THE ZAGREB REGIONAL FLIGHT CONTROL. UPON RECEIVING PERMISSION FROM FLIGHT CONTROL, THE DC-9 CONTINUED TO CLIMB IN THE DIRECTION OF KOSTAJNICA TO AN ALTITUDE OF 26,000 FEET (7,900 METERS). AT 11:08 HOURS CET, THE FLIGHT CONTROL GAVE THE CREW OF THE DC-9 PLANE PERMISSION TO CONTINUE CLIMBING IN THE DIRECTION OF KOSTAJNICA AND THE ZAGREB VOR, UP

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

TO AN ALTITUDE OF 35,000 FEET (10,650 METERS).
WHILE GUIDING THE OTHER PLANES WITHIN HIS COMPETENCE, THE FLIGHT CONTROLLER LOST SIGHT OF THE PERMISSION ISSUED AND FAILED TO APPLY THE REGULATIONS PRESCRIBED FOR SEPARATING THE PLANES.
THE CONTROLLER OF THE UPPER SECTION OF THE ZAGREB REGIONAL CONTROL BACAME AWARE OF THE THREAT OF A COLLISION ABOUT 40 SECONDS BEFORE THE DISASTER, AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE DC-9 RADIOED HIM IT WAS PASSING THE ALTITUDE OF 32,500 FEET (9,900 METERS). HE TRIED AT ONCE TO PREVENT THE COLLISION BY INFORMING THE DC-9 CREW THAT THEY HAD A PLANE IN FRONT OF THEM AND ORDERING THEM IN SERBO-CROATIAN TO STAY AT THE ALTITUDE REACHED, BUT THIS ORDER WAS ISSUED TOO LATE, AND THE PLANE, IN THE PROCESS OF CLIMBING, COULD NOT BE BROUGHT INSTANTLY INTO HORIZONTAL FLIGHT: THIS WAS ACHIEVED AT THE ALTITUDE AT WHICH THE TRIDENT WAS FLYING.
ACCORDINGLY, THIS DISASTER WAS A RESULT OF DEFINITE OMISSIONS ON THE PART OF THE FLIGHT CONTROLLER AT THE ZAGREB REGIONAL FLIGHT CONTROL. APART FROM THE OMISSIONS OF THE FLIGHT CONTROLLERS, THE CONCURRENCE OF A NUMBER OF OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, TOO, CONTRIBUTED TO THE COLLISION OF THESE PLANES WHICH OTHERWISE FLEW UNDER HIGH VISIBILITY CONDITIONS.
AFTER THE COLLISION, THE DEBRIS OF THE PLANES FELL OVER A LARGE AREA, 32 X 10 KM. IN SIZE. WHOLEHEARTED HELP IN LOCALIZING FIRE, SEARCHING THE GROUND AND EVACUATING THE VICTIMS WAS EXTENDED BY THE FIRE BRIGADES OF ZAGREB AND VRBOVEC, MEMBERS OF THE TERRITORIAL DEFENSE UNITS OF VRBOVEC, WORKERS OF THE VRBOVEC AGRICULTURAL-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, WORKERS OF THE SECRETARIAT FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE CONSTITUENT REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND THE NEARBY TOWNS AND CITIES, FORENSIC MEDICAL ORGANS, MEMBERS OF THE YUGOSLAV PEOPLE'S ARMY FROM THE ZAGREB GARRISON AND INHABITANTS
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

OF NEARBY VILLAGES."

3. THE "NUMBER OF CIRCUMSTANCES" WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE COLLISION OF THESE AIRCRAFT WERE NOT SPECIFIED IN THE TANJUG REPORT.

4. THIS REPORT CONTAINS THE FIRST OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT SERBO-CROATIAN, INSTEAD OF THE PRESCRIBED LANGUAGE, ENGLISH, WAS USED BY THE ZAGREB TOWER AT A CRITICAL POINT. BRITISH AND GERMAN PRESS HAD REPORTED THIS EARLIER.

5. WE HAVE REQUESTED THAT A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REPORT BE SENT TO US WHEN PRINTED AND WILL SEND IT ON WHEN RECEIVED.
YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, PRESS COMMENTS, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELGRA08433
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760473-1246
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976128/aaaaaglo.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BELGRADE 5943, 77 BELGRADE 5944
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <14 SEP 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MID-AIR COLLISION NEAR ZAGREB SEPTEMBER 10, 1976
TAGS: EAIR, YO, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006